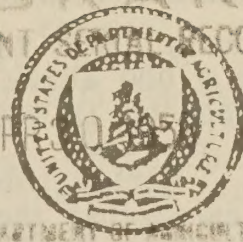


NORTH CAROLINA



Cooperative Crop Reporting Service



U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

No. 204

RALEIGH, N. C.

MARCH 28, 1956

SMALLER TOTAL CROP ACREAGE IN PROSPECT

Prospective planting reports for North Carolina farmers indicate a 2 percent reduction from last year in the acreage to be planted to the ten crops in the March survey of acreage intentions. Excluded from the report are acreages seeded to wheat and rye and acreage to be seeded to cotton. Seedings of wheat for harvest in 1956 were estimated last December at 392,000 -- 26,000 acres above that seeded for harvest in 1955. Seedings of rye were also estimated last December at 121,000 acres, which total was 9,000 acres above seedings in the Fall of 1954. Although prospective plantings of cotton are not estimated, reduced acreage allotments for 1956 will likely result in smaller acreages planted to that crop.

Smaller acreage allotments are expected to reduce the total acreage planted to all tobacco by 72,000 acres, or 11 percent. Seedings of corn are likely to fall about 4 percent below 1955, while slight reductions are indicated for oats, barley, potatoes and sweet potatoes.

These reductions are more than enough to offset increase in prospect for hay, soybeans, peanuts and sorghums.

The indicated acreages in prospect for 1956 are interpretations of reports from growers, and are based upon past relationships between such reports and acreages actually planted. The purpose of this report is to assist growers generally in making such further changes in their acreage plans as may appear desirable. The acreage actually planted in 1956 may turn out larger or smaller than indicated by reason of weather conditions, price changes, labor supply, financial conditions, the Agricultural Program and the effects of this report itself upon farmers' actions.

PROSPECTIVE DECREASE IN TOBACCO ACREAGE

According to reports on farmers intentions as of March 1, flue-cured tobacco growers in North Carolina expect to plant a 1956 crop of 582,000 acres. Such an acreage would be 71,000 acres short of the 653,000 acres harvested last year, a reduction of approximately 11 percent, and it would be almost 17 percent under the 1945-54 average of 699,000 acres. The expected decrease is very close to the announced cuts in acreage allotments.

Making up the intended 1956 flue-cured totals, the expected plantings by types are as follows: Type 11 for the Old and Middle Belts, 227,000 acres as compared to 255,000 acres for 1955 and the 1945-54 ten-year average of 272,000 acres. In the Type 12 area (Eastern Belt) present intentions are for an acreage of 282,000 as against 317,000 acres harvested in 1955 and a ten-year average of 341,000 acres. Type 13, or Border Belt tobacco, is expected to

(Continued on Page 2)

SMALL DECREASE IN CORN ACREAGE INDICATED FOR 1956

March 1, 1956 prospective plantings of corn indicate that 2,070,000 acres will be planted for all purposes. If farmers carry out their intentions, they will plant 4 percent less acreage than was planted in 1955 and 7 percent less than the 1945-54 average of 2,224,000 acres.

March indications point to a small decrease in all 8 Crop Reporting Districts of the State. Corn acreage allotments are in effect in 27 Eastern North Carolina Counties this year compared with 23 in 1955.

For the United States corn plantings

(Continued on Page 2)

TOBACCO ACREAGE (Continued)

occupy about 73,000 acres, which would be 8,000 acres short of the crop for 1955 and 13,000 acres under the 1945-54 average.

Burley tobacco producers have indicated that they will plant about 9,000 acres in 1956. This would be eight percent short of the 9,800 acres harvested in 1955 and 2,230 acres under the average acreage for 1945 through 1954. The current decrease has been prompted chiefly by a reduction in the acres allotted.

Nationwide, combined farmers' intentions indicate that a total of 1,365,600 acres of tobacco will be planted in the United States in 1956. This would be almost a 10 percent decrease from the 1,510,100 acres harvested in 1955. The U. S. acreage for this year would be made up largely by 880,200 acres intended for flue-cured tobacco and an expected acreage of 300,300 for burley. Flue-cured tobacco would, thus, be reduced approximately 11 percent from the 991,700 acres for 1955 and burley would fall short of the previous year's acreage by about seven percent.

CORN ACREAGE (Continued)

at 78.7 million acres will be the lowest in 31 years of record if farmers do not exceed the acreage intended about March 1. The indicated acreage would be 3.5 percent below plantings last year and seven percent below average. In the past 10 years, final estimates of plantings have varied from intentions by as much as four percent under to one percent over, with the average about one percent under the prospective acreage.

On February 1, the USDA announced corn acreage allotments for the 1956 crop totaling about 43.3 million acres, or about 24 percent below the acreage planted in the area last year. The national minimum average support price for 1956 corn was announced on February 8 at \$1.40 per bushel, 81 percent of the mid-January parity price and 18 cents per bushel below the 1955 support. By March 1, most farmers in commercial areas had their individual corn allotments or knew about the change in county allotments. The allotment in 840 commercial counties this year is 43.3 million acres compared with 49.8 million acres in 805 commercial counties a year ago. The intended drop in plant-

ed acreage is quite uniform by areas. The comparatively wide price spread between C.C.C. loan price and market price for the 1955 crop is a factor influencing many producers to plant within allotments this year.

U. S. COTTON SITUATION

The rate of domestic mill consumption of cotton has increased more than seasonally since last August and the total for the marketing year is expected to be about 9.2 million bales, 0.4 million more than in 1954-55. Exports, on the other hand, have been sharply below a year earlier. The season's total is likely to be nearly a million bales below the 1954-55 level of 3.4 million.

Disappearance of 11.7 million bales from the record 1955-56 supply of 25.7 million bales would leave a carryover of 14 million bales next August 1. This would be one million bales above the previous record of 1939 and 2.9 million above August 1, 1955.

Stocks held by the CCC on December 30 were at an all time high of about 13.5 million bales.

FEBRUARY CHICK PRODUCTION

Chicks hatched in North Carolina commercial hatcheries during February amounted to 9,522,000, a record high for the month. This output was 23 percent above the production of 7,759,000 for February a year ago and 55 percent more than the five-year average of 6,142,000 for the period 1950 through 1954.

February chick production for the United States was also the largest for the month on record. The number of chicks hatched totaled 198,171,000 in comparison with 163,360,000 produced in February last year and the 1950-54 February average of 170,341,000. The previous record February hatch occurred in 1954 when production reached 190,662,000. Of this year's February hatch, 112,194,000 were for commercial broiler production and 85,977,000 were for other purposes. The number for broilers was 22 percent larger than a year ago, while the number hatched for other purposes was 21 percent larger.

The demand for chicks both for broiler and egg production is relatively strong, and a larger hatch in March is in prospect. The number of eggs in incubators on March 1 for broilers was 23 percent larger and for non-broilers it was 10 percent larger than a year earlier.

SMALL GRAIN ACREAGES

According to farmers' reports of acreages already seeded and their intentions as of March 1, the total 1956 acres of oats and barley planted for all purposes in North Carolina will be less than the planted acres for 1955. The March 1 reports indicate that the acreage seeded to oats will amount to 709,000, a reduction of six percent from the 754,000 acres planted for 1955. Barley planted is expected to occupy about 64,000 acres, a two percent decrease from the 65,000 acres planted for last year.

Acres intended for wheat and rye were not covered by the current March 1 survey, an estimate of the acreage seeded to these crops last fall having been released in December. The reported fall seeded acreage of wheat for all purposes was placed at 392,000, an increase of seven percent over the plantings of the previous fall. Rye planted for all purposes was estimated at 115,000 acres, a three percent increase for the same period. Adding the December estimates for wheat and rye to the March 1 intentions for barley and oats gives a combined indication of 1,280,000 acres planted to small grain for all purposes for 1956. This is little different from the 1,297,000 acres (only 1.3 percent less) of small grain planted for all purposes for 1955.

For the United States, a total of 59.8 million acres of wheat is indicated by combining the intended seeded acreage of spring wheat with the acreage of winter wheat planted as estimated last December. This is an increase of 1.5 million acres over the 58.3 million acres planted for the 1955 wheat crop. Oats acreage seeded last fall and this spring will be the fourth largest of record if farmers carry out their March 1 intentions. An expected 46.1 million acres planted to oats would be four percent less than the record acreage seeded for 1955, but four percent more than the 10-year average. Barley seedings last fall together with those made and to be made this spring point to a total of 14.8 million acres for 1956. This would be eight percent less than the 16 million acres planted for the 1955 crop, but otherwise the largest since 1943. The acreage planted to rye last fall was estimated at 45.2 million, an increase for this year of about two percent over the acreage seeded for all purposes for 1955.

In reviewing these prospective grain acreages, emphasis is placed on the fact that they are planting intentions or

seedings for all purposes. Considerable portions of these crops, especially of rye and oats, are usually planted for grazing, winter cover, or soil improvement, of which some part may be harvested for grain. Rye in particular is largely used for these special purposes, and normally only a small part of the crop planted is intended for grain.

SLIGHT INCREASE IN N. C.

HAY ACREAGE INDICATED

On the basis of intention reports from farmers, as of March 1, the acreage of "all hay" will be 1,144,000. This is 33,000 acres, or 3 percent, above the 1955 acres harvested. Acreage increases are indicated for alfalfa, soybeans, peanuts, and "other hay". Those indicating a smaller acreage are clover-timothy, cowpea and grain hay.

For the U. S. farmers intend to have a small increase in hay acreages this year. The indicated 1956 total of 74.3 million acres of hay crops of all kinds would be only slightly above the 74 million harvested last year and very little different from the 10-year average of 73.8 million acres. Intentions indicate a small reduction from last year in wild hay and an increase in tame hay. If yields per acre should equal the 1950-54 average, by states, a production of about 105.3 million tons would be realized from the prospective acreage. This tonnage would exceed the 1945-54 ten-year average by about three million tons, but it would fall short of the record 1955 production by almost 4.5 million tons.

SORGHUM ACREAGE CONTINUES TO INCREASE

Recent reports received from producers of sorghum indicate that 144,000 acres will be planted for all purposes in North Carolina in 1954. This compares with 137,000 acres planted in 1955 and the 1945-54 average of 49,000 acres. For the past several years sorghum acreage has been on the increase in North Carolina. In 1955 about 79 percent of the total planted acreage was harvested for grain, 12 percent for forage, 6 percent for silage, and 3 percent for sirup.

March indications point to a total U. S. planted sorghum acreage of 24.2 million acres. This compares with 24.1 million acres planted in 1955 and 14.4 million acres for the 10-year (1945-54) average.

COMMERCIAL VEGETABLE REPORT

BEETS: Reports from growers indicate that the acreage of beets planted in North Carolina for 1956 totals 330. This is 10 percent above the 300 acres harvested last year.

The total acreage in the four spring states is placed at 1,030 acres compared to 900 acres harvested last year and the average of 1,130 acres.

CABBAGE, LATE SUMMER: Late summer cabbage growers in North Carolina report that they intend to plant 4,900 acres this year. If current plans materialize, the 1955 planted acreage will be about 2 percent more than the 4,800 acres harvested last year.

Intentions reports indicate that about 21,500 acres of cabbage for fresh market and kraut will be planted in the 10 late summer states. This will be about 3 percent larger than the acreage harvested in 1955.

LETTUCE: Reports from lettuce growers in the Tar Heel State indicate that 1,800 acres of lettuce has been planted for harvest in 1956. This is 600 acres above last year's harvested acreage and about 550 acres above average. Wet soils retarded planting operations in several sections but most of the crop has now been seeded and is in good condition.

Based on March 1 condition, the yield is expected to average 120 L.A. crates per acre.

Production of early spring lettuce in the five producing states is forecast at 7,664,000 crates, 11 percent more than last year's small crop and 5 percent above average. Production indicated for this year is only slightly below the record high levels established for early spring lettuce in 1950 and 1951. There has been a marked shift between producing areas this year. The California acreage has been held at the lowest level since 1943 by heavy winter rains which interfered with plantings during December and January. Most of this reduction was offset by sharp expansion in spring lettuce in Arizona's Salt River Valley. Acreage there is up 50 percent from 1955 and is close to the record high of 18,500 acres cut in 1941. Harvest of spring lettuce in Arizona is under way and movement from there will increase seasonally during March. No appreciable volume of spring lettuce will be available from Central California until early April. Production during April will be relatively light because of the small acreage planted in December and January, but the Arizona

crop should fill this gap.

STRAWBERRIES: The strawberry acreage for harvest in North Carolina is presently estimated at 1,500 acres, the same as was harvested last year.

March 1 reports from the mid-spring states indicated 57,800 acres for harvest -- 39 percent above last year and 8 percent above average.

The first production forecast of the early spring crop in Louisiana, Alabama, and Texas is 968,000 crates, more than double last year's early spring production and 24 percent above average.

WATERMELONS: On March 1 North Carolina watermelon growers reported they intend to plant an estimated 13,000 acres of melons this year. If these intentions are carried out, it will result in a 7 percent drop from last year's harvested acreage.

Total prospective acreage in the early-summer areas is estimated at 315,800 acres, 6 percent less than the acreage harvested last year but 8 percent above average.

SLIGHTLY SMALLER

IRISH POTATO ACREAGE EXPECTED

March 1 reports from Tar Heel farmers indicate intentions to plant 37,000 acres of Irish potatoes this year. If present intentions materialize the 1956 acreage will be 3 percent below the 38,000 acres planted last year and 36 percent below the 10-year average planted acreage of 58,000.

The commercial early crop is expected to total 15,000 acres this year, the same as for 1955.

For the U. S. growers are expected to plant 1,393,600 acres of potatoes in 1956. This will be 4 percent below last year and 25 percent below average.

SWEET POTATO ACREAGE

Reports from sweet potato growers in North Carolina indicate that 41,000 acres will be planted in the State during 1956. If current intentions are carried out this year's acreage will be 7 percent below the 45,000 acres planted last year and 18 percent, or 9,000 acres, below the 1945-54 (10-year) average plantings.

For the Nation an indicated 322,800 acres will be planted in 1956. If these intentions are carried out the acreage will be 11 percent below the 1955 planted acres and 31 percent under the 1945-54 average plantings. The reduction in the intended acreage for 1956 is apparently the result of the relatively low prices received for the 1955 crop.

SOYBEAN ACREAGE CONTINUES TO EXPAND

According to reports as of March 1, North Carolina farmers intend to plant 514,000 acres of soybeans grown alone for all purposes in 1956. If these plans materialize, this acreage will exceed the 467,000 planted in 1955 by 10 percent and will be 29 percent above the 1945-54 ten-year average of 398,000 acres. The intended acreage is larger by far than any one previously recorded as planted for the State. The total acreage, of course, is for soybeans for all purposes. Estimates of the acreage that will be harvested for beans and for other uses will be made later in the year.

On a national scale producers expect to plant 21,760,000 acres of soybeans grown alone for all purposes. Such an acreage would be nearly 11 percent above the 19,669,000 acres planted in 1955, the previous high, and a little over 15 percent above the 1945-54 average.

INCREASED PEANUT ACREAGE FOR 1956

Prospective 1956 plantings of peanuts grown alone for all purposes in North Carolina is indicated at 200,000 acres. This would be an increase of four percent over the 192,000 acres planted last year, but it would be short of the 1945-54 ten-year average acreage of 258,000 by almost 23 percent. The currently proposed larger acreage has been made possible by a permitted increase in allotments for Virginia Type peanuts.

For the United States as a whole, a decrease of four percent from the 1955 acreage is indicated for peanuts grown alone for all purposes. The acreage is expected to total 1,923,000 in 1956 as compared to 2,004,000 acres for 1955. First estimates of the 1956 peanut acreage to be used for picking and threshing will be released later in the year.

N. C. CASH FARM RECEIPTS SHOWS INCREASE

Cash receipts from farm marketings in North Carolina amounted to \$936,830,000 during the calendar year of 1955 and exceeded similar receipts for 1954 by about one percent. Receipts for livestock and livestock products were slightly down, but this was more than offset by a 1.6 percent increase in cash receipts from crops.

In the South Atlantic Region, Virginia,

West Virginia, and Maryland registered decreases in total cash farm receipts from those of the previous year. On the other hand, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida and Delaware showed sizeable increases, so that there was an overall increase for the region. Nationally the cash receipts from farm marketings as between the two years were down almost three percent.

CASH RECEIPTS FROM FARM MARKETINGS, CALENDAR YEAR 1954-1955

STATE AND REGION	LIVESTOCK & PRODUCTS		CROPS		TOTAL	
	1954	1955	1954	1955	1954	1955
	<u>1,000 DOLLARS</u>		<u>1,000 DOLLARS</u>		<u>1,000 DOLLARS</u>	
N. Carolina...	221,974	219,880	705,849	716,950	927,823	936,830
S. Carolina...	91,261	87,835	227,894	262,178	319,155	350,013
Virginia.....	256,300	248,192	198,230	193,146	454,530	441,338
Georgia.....	279,399	297,889	315,726	338,319	595,125	636,208
Delaware.....	73,705	80,115	24,916	23,742	98,621	103,857
Maryland.....	164,563	165,364	84,001	70,813	248,564	236,177
W. Virginia...	94,030	90,523	28,783	24,339	122,813	114,862
Florida.....	128,715	123,255	418,248	480,871	546,963	604,126
S. ATLANTIC...	1,309,947	1,313,053	2,003,647	2,110,358	3,313,594	3,423,411
UNITED STATES	16,688,038	15,970,661	13,515,345	13,430,776	30,203,383	29,401,437

PROSPECTIVE PLANTINGS FOR 1956

CROPS	NORTH CAROLINA					UNIT Of Yield	UNITED STATES			
	AVERAGE 1945-1954		ACREAGE PLANTED				AVERAGE 1945-1954		ACREAGE PLANTED	
	Acreage Planted	Yield Per Planted Acre	1955	Indicated	1956		Acreage Planted	Yield Per Planted Acre	1955	Indicated
			1955	1956	% Of 1955				1956	% Of 1955
(000)	Units	(000)	(000)	(000)	%	(000)	Units	(000)	(000)	%
Corn, All.....	2,224	28.1	2,156	2,070	96 Bu.	84,815	36.3	81,577	78,686	96.5
Oats 1/.....	517	24.5	754	709	94 Bu.	44,307	30.6	48,021	46,063	95.9
Barley 1/.....	48	24.4	65	64	98 Bu.	11,713	23.6	16,102	14,773	91.7
All Hay 2/.....	1,228	1.02	1,111	1,144	103 Ton	73,836	1.39	73,984	74,305	100.4
Potatoes.....	53	143	38	37	97 Bu.	1,858.5	221.3	1,451.9	1,393.6	96.0
Sweet Potatoes.....	50	106	45	41	91 Bu.	466.2	92.1	363.8	322.8	88.7
Tobacco 2/										
Type 11.....	272.1	1,129	255.0	227.0	89 Lbs.	375.0	1,148	354.0	314.0	89
Type 12.....	341.3	1,288	317.0	282.0	89 Lbs.	341.3	1,288	317.0	282.0	89
Type 13.....	85.8	1,258	81.0	73.0	90 Lbs.	210.9	1,256	198.0	177.0	89
All Flue-cured....	699.2	1,228	653.0	582.0	89 Lbs.	1,049.2	1,214	991.7	880.2	89
Type 31 (Burley)..	11.2	1,650	9.8	9.0	92 Lbs.	447.0	1,310	322.3	300.3	93
All Tobacco.....	710.4	1,229	662.8	591.0	89 Lbs.	1,726.0	1,236	1,510.1	1,365.6	90.4
Soybeans 3/.....	398	-	467	514	110 -	14,290	-	19,669	21,730	110.6
Peanuts 3/.....	258	-	192	200	104 -	2,943	-	2,004	1,923	96.0
Sorghums, All Purpose	49	-	137	144	105 -	14,383	-	24,113	24,198	100.4

1/ Includes acreage planted preceding fall.

2/ Acreage Harvested.

3/ Grown alone for all purposes.

WEATHER SUMMARY FOR FEBRUARY, 1956

The only cold spell of more than a day or two duration was the 21st through the 24th, and even then it was not unusually cold for the time of year. The last day of February was cold enough to produce new record low temperatures for the particular date in some places, but only because February 29th occurs less often than other dates.

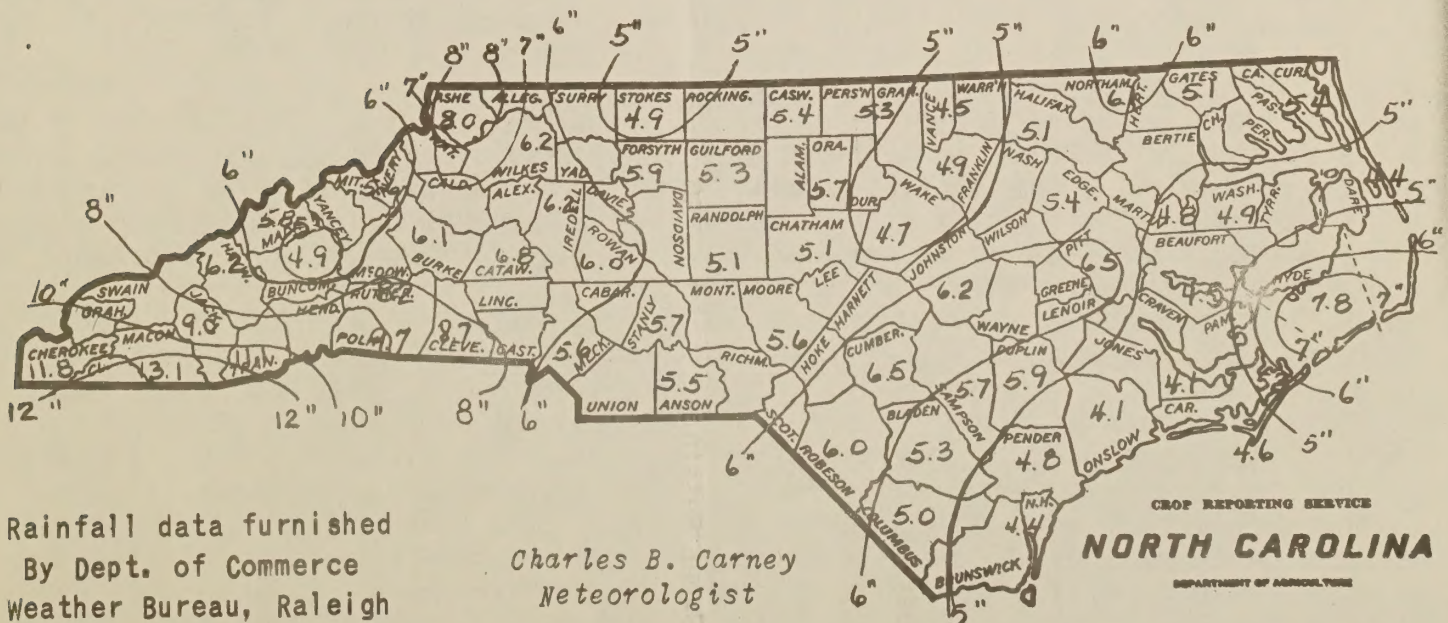
February was the wettest month in North Carolina since last fall's hurricane rains. Amounts up to thirteen inches fell over the Southern Mountains. On the rest of State, amounts ranged from four inches on the southeast coast up to five or six inches over most of the piedmont and northern Coastal plain. In the Mountain section, amounts reported ranged from just under five inches at Asheville to six or eight inches over most of the area outside the extremely wet southern slopes.

February rains fell frequently and in light to moderate doses. Even in the wettest places, there was rarely a single day's rain amounting to as much as two inches, and many parts of the State achieved a heavier-than-average total for February without even having an inch in one day. Some places had measurable rain on more than twenty of the twenty-nine days. There was very little snow during the month.

February weather contrasted sharply with the cold, dry weather of December and January. There was not a single case during the month of a large, cold high pressure system moving down from arctic or polar regions over the Southeast and remaining long enough to take full effect on North Carolina. Such systems that moved in were weak, and either moved out quickly or were broken up by passing low pressure storms. The result was a considerable amount of heavy cloudiness during the month; there were several days with fog, and a few with thunderstorms. Strong winds swept practically the entire State on the 25th in connection with the passage of a cold front associated with an intense low pressure system which crossed the northeastern states. Gusts of destructive force struck many areas, and in some places record high winds for the time of year were recorded.

February temperatures averaged more than three degrees above normal over North Carolina, and most of the month was consistently on the warm side. Record high readings for the time of year were recorded at a number of places during the first two weeks and again around the 18th. Lumberton reported a high of 80 degrees on the latter date, and large areas of the State climbed well up in the 70's.

INCHES OF RAINFALL FOR FEBRUARY, 1956



FARM REPORT

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FEBRUARY MILK PRODUCTION 5 MILLION POUNDS ABOVE LAST YEAR

Milk production on North Carolina farms during February totaled 125 million pounds, 5 million pounds above the 120 million pounds produced in February of 1955, and 18 percent above the 1945-54 February average.

Average daily milk production per cow of 15.0 pounds as of March 1 compares with 13.7 pounds a year earlier and 14.0 pounds at the same time in 1954.

Production of milk on U. S. farms in February totaled 9,582 million pounds, 8 percent more than last year when February had 28 days and 17 percent above the February 1945-54 average. On a daily basis, milk production for February this year ran about 5 percent higher than in 1955.

Milk production per cow in crop reporters' herds on March 1 averaged 18.96 pounds, and exceeded the previous record high reported last year by 1.3 pounds or about 8 percent. In all regions of the Country, output per cow was at a record high for March 1.

FEBRUARY EGG PRODUCTION 17 PERCENT ABOVE LAST YEAR

Egg production on North Carolina farms during February, 1956, totaled 137 million eggs, about 17 percent above the 117 million produced in February of 1955.

The number of layers on hand during February totaled 9,099,000 -- 6 percent more than last year. Eggs laid per layer was 15.1 and compares with 13.7 for February a year earlier.

Meanwhile, U. S. farm flocks laid 5,134 million eggs in February -- 5 percent more than in February last year and 2 percent above the 1945-54 average. The extra day in February this year accounts for about 4 percent of the increase over a year earlier.

The rate of egg production in February was 15.9 eggs per layer, compared with 14.9 eggs last year and the average of 13.7 eggs. Here again the extra day in February this year was mainly responsible for the 6 percent increase in eggs per layer from last year.

The Nation's laying flock averaged 324 million layers in February -- 1 percent less than in February last year.

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